

Crime Laboratory Commission Meeting

October 24, 2012

Department of Attorney General

150 South Main Street

Providence, RI

3rd Floor Conference Room

2:15 PM

In attendance were Gerald J. Coyne, Deputy Attorney General, Rhode Island Department of Attorney General; Director Dennis Hilliard, Rhode Island State Crime Laboratory; Dean Ronald Jordan, University of Rhode Island; John Grassel Rhode Island State Police; Clay Choquette; Nancy Haley; and Robin Smith Rhode Island Department of Health Forensic Science Laboratory.

I. INTRODUCTION

A. Welcome to Commission Members

Deputy Attorney General Coyne on behalf of the Attorney General welcomed Commission members and called the meeting to order at 2:15 PM.

B. Approve Minutes of August 17, 2011

A motion was made to approve the minutes of the June 13, 2012 meeting by Gerald Coyne, Clay Choquette seconded. All were in favor and the minutes were approved.

II. FUNDING

A. Budget FY 2012/2011

a. FY 2011 Close out

Last meeting we had a discussion about there being a deficit for FY 2011. The University received a supplemental fund of \$71,885.00 in the FY 2013 budget which will be applied to the FY2011 deficit of \$101,701.42. The balance was billed to DOH. It is doubtful that DOH will reimburse URI. The University has closed out the account regardless whether DOH reimburses the balance or not.

b. FY 2012 Close out

Originally there was expected to be a \$3-4,000.00 surplus, but unfortunately the year ended with a \$13,868.00 deficit. Monies were earmarked for the 3% COLA's for FY 2012. but these raises were not approved in contracts so these funds needed to be expended prior to June 30, 2012 or they would be lost. Funding which was earmarked for these raises was then spent. It is expected that this will be resolved in FY2013 budget

c. Byrne Grant FY 2011.

This Grant is fully expended. We used this money to pay for our NIBIN position.

d. Coverdell Grant FY 2011

Grant monies have been expended on our QA position back to March, 2012.

B. Budget FY 2013

a. State Appropriation

The allocation from the State is \$858,000.00 Director Hilliard prepared spread sheets which were distributed to each member at the beginning of the meeting which itemizes expenses, salaries, and benefits. Commission members were asked to review the spreadsheets and then Director Hilliard asked if anyone had any questions on the expenses, etc. No questions were asked. Director Hilliard then explained that - to date one-quarter of the money has been spent.

b. Coverdell Grant FY2012

This Grant was awarded and amount to be received is \$14,291.55 which is a four-way-split. This money is to be used for our Quality Assurance Officer Position which alleviates the deficit for FY2012. A competitive award was re-submitted for renovations in the Firearm section which we would like to have located Fogarty in the amount of \$175,000.00. Unfortunately, this was not funded. Director Hilliard informed the Commission that a panel review of the grant was performed and one area of error was the issue of backlog in cases. This may have been an issue which caused the denial. Right now there is no money for any renovations.

c. Byrne Grant FY 2012

No money has been awarded as of yet. We have been informed that funds are down from last year. Funds which were requested will continue to support our NIBIN technician position which is currently funded in the FY2013 budget with limited hours.

1. AFIS Grant - there was a successful award of funds from 2009 and 2010 which was a culmination of four different unallocated funds. \$29,695.00 was used to purchase a second AFIS work station; to repair the alternate light source bulb and filter; and latent print supplies and a RUVIS camera system were purchased. All the funds were spent. Director Hilliard asked if there were any questions. No questions.

C. BUDGET FY2014 Proposal

Two budget proposals were prepared. One is for \$880,000.00 which is a budget with no increases. The second budget is asking and additional \$300,000.00 in funding. This money is needed to replace aging equipment including GC/MS and FTIR. It was explained that the equipment is ten years old and parts are either unavailable to find or if you can find them very expensive. Besides those factors the company will not offer any service agreement on the equipment. Dean Jordan suggested that Director Hilliard look at a Capital budget request. Question was then asked if the equipment could be traded in. It was explained that because of the age of the equipment probably there would not be much value in trading them in. The new equipment price range is between \$100,000.00-150,000.00 Discussion was made asking if the equipment could be donated and used at URI

for class demonstration. Also it was discussed that in the increased budget there are salaries for new positions included. One position is for a computer resource part-time position and adding a criminalist full time position.

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D. OTHER SOURCES OF FUNDING

a. Proposal for Google Funds

Director Hilliard informed The Commission that he had prepared a proposal and hand delivered it to Mr. Coyne today before the meeting. The proposal included asking for money for equipment and renovations to the Laboratory at Fogarty Hall. Director Hilliard explained that the proposal included the need for more space for the Laboratory As discussed in previous meetings the firing tank is not located on the premises of the laboratory and it would be beneficial to have the firing tank located within the laboratory. Mr. Coyne explained that as of this date no monies have been released from the DOJ. Mr. Coyne, also stated that he will review and present the proposal.

III: LABORATORY STATUS

A. Laboratory Progress Report

a. Training has been done by Laboratory Staff Personnel. A detailed list of all the training courses, seminars and online training which has been attended by the Laboratory Staff Members from January 1, 2012 up until September 30, 2012 was handed out at the beginning of the meeting for the Commission Members to review..

b. Interns.

Director Hilliard explained that there were four interns in the Laboratory during the summer months. Question was raised as to if the interns actually get to do any work. Director Hilliard explained that they shadow the Laboratory Staff Members and are not allowed to do any actual work Besides shadowing they are allowed to prepare samples. One of the interns was actually a local high school science teacher and the other interns were from URI, UNH, and BU.

c. January 1-September 30, 2012 update. There is an increase in cases. There have been 615 cases to date which is on track for the year.

1. Firearms Section update

Firearms Section shows a backlog of about 438 cases which is down from last year. The Staff continues to work on trying to reduce the number of backlog cases. There were two media events which occurred due to the issue of what happened in Massachusetts with their laboratory. There was an article which appeared in the Providence Journal and an interview with Channel 6 news.

2. Latent Print Section update

We have seen an increase in the amount of work in the latent print

section Right now there is a backlog of about 70 cases. If a case is put on rush the wait time is about one to two weeks. The Adobe Acrobat software was updated; there was an upgrade RUVIS (added camera) and a repair of the Crime Scope ALS.

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3. Trace Section Update

Backlog is 42 cases.

B. Laboratory Personnel Badges and Commissions

At this point in time the badges have been approved by the Commission, but have not been ordered.

C. ISO/IEC Accreditation

As reported at the last meeting the Laboratory passed the Desk Audit for 2012. There will be an on-site accreditation visit in April/May of 2013. The cost of this is approximately \$8,000.00 which has been factored into the budget.

D. Space Allocation

Director Hilliard stated that it looks like the Laboratory will remain in Fogarty Hall, but plans are not complete. The University is interested in any funding that can be made available to the Laboratory which can be used for needed space renovation. It is beneficial to bring the fire arm tank back to Fogarty. Acoustical testing will be carried out to determine if the firing tank can be placed into Fogarty Hall as there are animal quarters on the floor and it is necessary to see if there are

any sound or vibration effects which may be harmful to the animals.

IV. NEW BUSINESS

A. Commission Participation in Budget Process

Director Hilliard asked what would be the best way to get the Commission involved in the Budget talks with The University of Rhode Island. It was decided after discussion to hold the next meeting of the Commission at the URI Campus so the Commission could view the space that the Laboratory has been working with. Everyone was in favor of that. Next meeting will be held in January, 2013. Dean Jordan would find a site on campus to host the meeting and the members would be notified.

B. Police Chief Vacancy on Commission

Director Hilliard asked when a replacement representing Police Chiefs would be appointed. Mr. Coyne stated that we would have to wait but that eventually The Governor would appoint a new member based on recommendation from RI Police Chiefs Association

Deputy Attorney Gerald Coyne made a motion to adjourn, with all members in favor; the meeting was adjourned at 2:55 PM

Minutes taken and transcribed by:

Monica A. Nason, Department of Attorney General